

Three Concepts, One Huge Impact

Phase II of the Facilities Master Plan and Civic Center Urban Planning

My past articles have focused on the Facilities Master Plan and the improvements underway with the construction of the new Public Works Maintenance Facility (Phase I) and the design of our new senior center, library, and community building (Phase II). Today, I am going to focus on a portion of Phase II and the possible improvements to West U's Civic Center that will make this area more accessible and usable for our community's families.

The urban planning improvements to the Civic Center evolved after the approval of the Facilities Master Plan, which focused solely on buildings and considered the Civic Center as a whole. As we all can appreciate, land in West U is a precious commodity, and so it's imperative to ensure that this limited space is being used in the best manner possible for the community. This is why Phase I relocates the Public Works Maintenance Facility to City-owned property outside of West U, leaving its current space to be repurposed for community use.

Over the last four months, the City's consultant has developed three concepts (West U Green, West U Commons, and West U Town Square) for consideration by the City Council and the community. The robust feedback that we have already received on these distinct urban planning concepts will help us shape our Civic Center not only now, but also for generations to come. Some of the top suggestions we received from our neighbors included:

- Consolidating the new buildings to create more green space
- Adding more trees in our community
- Providing more efficient parking space
- Improving pedestrian safety and mobility.

The final urban planning concept will more than likely encapsulate elements from each of the three planning concepts that will collectively address the needs and desires of our community when it comes to our civic space, senior center, library, and community building. The specific design for these buildings is underway through the remainder of 2024, with another town hall engagement opportunity on the buildings' design scheduled for November 12th.

The ability to reimagine these three facilities and our Civic Center is truly a great opportunity. I am proud of our community's participation in this process, and I look forward to seeing you at future meetings. Your voice matters, and we do not want to just present you with a finished product – we want to work with you to co-create these spaces that will reflect the needs and aspirations of our West U residents.

Community input is most effective in the early stages of the design process, so please continue to fill out comment cards, attend public meetings, and submit suggestions to the City's dedicated email inbox at FMP@westutx.gov.

REASSESSING OUR RECREATION CENTER

Parks & Recreation Maintenance, which is located at the Recreation Center, will move to the new Public Works Maintenance Facility once it is completed in the fall of 2025. The space currently being used by Parks & Recreation Maintenance will be repurposed to ensure that this building will continue to meet the needs of our community.

This fall, the City will begin looking at the Recreation Center to see if there are any other changes needed for this facility. Some suggestions that I have heard over the years, for example, include adding a large weight room and more space for cardio workouts.

This is a perfect time to hear from our community! To kick off this process, the City will hold a town hall meeting on the same night as the Civic Center town hall meeting (November 12). The Recreation Center discussion will be its very own event – this way, you can attend one or both of the meetings.

Building a Better West U

These are exciting times. Opportunities like this do not come around often. There is no better time like today to get involved and let your voice be heard in the design process that will change our Civic Center; imagine new homes for our senior services, library, and community building; and update our Recreation Center.

I look forward to seeing you at these meetings!